

The Function and Influence of the Emancipatory Binary and the Progressive Triad in the Discourse on Citizenship in Social Studies Education

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Abstract: Using an analytic informed by Nietzschean genealogy and systems theory, this paper explains how two conceptual structures (the emancipatory binary and the progressive triad), along with standard citation practices in academic journal writing, function to sustain and regenerate a progressive perspective within social studies education scholarship. Exemplary essays, drawn from social studies education scholarship from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s are presented and examined in reference to the function of the conceptual structures in the evolution of the discourse on citizenship in social studies education.

Key words: Citizenship education, genealogy, discourse, conceptual structures, binaries, discourse analysis, history.

Introduction

In this essay, I examine the contention that a narrative of social and moral progress directs the discourse on citizenship in social studies education in the United States. An analytic derived from Nietzschean genealogy and systems theory is used to situate the progressive perspective, to examine salient essays from the last five decades, and to explain the development of the narrative. I argue an emancipatory binary, introduced in the 1970s, has come to frame a narrative of social progress, and this binary-structured narrative is supported, in turn, by what is identified as the progressive triad. I close by reflecting upon the impact of the discourse, thus structured.

Genealogy as a Historical Analytic

As understood here, genealogy refers to an analytical approach to historical research that examines the evolution of systems of thought (Foucault, 1971). Genealogical histories often aim to understand and explain how prevailing perspectives and official histories, as well as the

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metanarratives that support them, came to be sanctioned or normalized (e.g., Johnson, 2017; Qvarsebo, 2013; Weiler, 2006). Michel Foucault's genealogical work is most familiar within education scholarship, but his approach to history was strongly influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche. Foucault directly discussed the connection between his work and Nietzsche's in several places (e.g., Foucault, 2003; Rabinow, 1984), but he did so most directly in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (Foucault, 1971). Convincing evidence of Nietzsche's influence on Foucault can also be found by examining the second essay of Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* (in which he discussed the origins of the institutionalization of punishment) alongside Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and Punish*. Together, these three works provide a theoretical and working introduction to Nietzschean genealogy.

In addition to being an analytic form of historical research, the genealogical approach is more precisely characterized by its nominalism, or refutation of essences (see Sherratt, 2003). Nietzsche's anti-essentialism relates his critique of metaphysics to history, identity, and ethics. Moreover, Nietzsche's critique can be understood as the/an origin of postmodern forms of thinking. The primary effect of Nietzsche's influence on historical analysis is a special caution against attempts to find the unbroken continuation of a thing's essence through time, as it developed or evolved from a primal origin toward its present state. For example, perhaps most would agree that it would be a mistake to try to understand how the human thumb evolved so that it could allow a person to text on a cell phone. The present utility of a thing (such as the thumb) often has little connection to its original development. A similar mistake is to presume that the value we ascribe to our current moral prejudices, such as humility, patience, courage, and so forth, are the reasons for their original development. (Many of our present virtues, according to Nietzsche (1887), were once considered negative qualities that characterized the weak and powerless. Over time, however, the negative characteristics were reevaluated and transformed from vice to virtue by their possessors.) Finally, the historian should bear in mind that there is no single origin to which a social fact can be traced. Moral beliefs, social structures, norms, and so on are always multiple and complex. As such, the genealogist does not search for unbroken lines of descent that explain the rational and purposeful evolution of an idea or a system of ideas from their origin to their present manifestations. Examined instead are how local forces, self- and group-interests, the availability of pre-existing ideas, and other contextual factors have affected the development of perspectives, discourses, and systems of thought.

Two Views of Moral and Social Evolution

The interpretive practices noted above are not limited to genealogical histories; they are common to historiographical approaches wary of universal metanarratives. Within social studies education scholarship, however, implicit and explicit acceptance of moral universals (related to justice, equity, universal human rights, and other ideas historically associated with the 19th century progressive metanarrative) continue to influence the discourse on civic and democratic education (Johnson, 2016). I believe that Nietzsche's nonessentialism, used as an historical analytic, can begin to pry open the discourse and challenge the residuum of modernist thinking common in scholarship on social studies education in the U.S.

The idea that the world is evolving toward universal consciousness and that societies tend to develop toward equality and democracy can be traced back to Hegel through Marx. It should immediately be noted that the progressive view of historical development has multiple origins, and many different histories of this cosmology could be assembled. Moreover, Hegel's thoughts on the topic are complex and contentious. A fuller intellectual history of the progressive worldview would also discuss the work of Kant, Fichte, Schilling, and others (see e.g., Fritzman & Gibson, 2012). Nonetheless, because of Hegel's influence on Marx and the Frankfurt School, and his place as perhaps the primary theorist of social evolution prior to Darwin, Hegel's vision of social progress seems to be the best place to *briefly* introduce the progressive worldview as manifest in social studies education.

As theorized by Hegel (1807) in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, social evolution, through the dialectical unfolding of history, is guided by the Geist (World Spirit). In this view, as history unfolds, human society evolves through higher states of consciousness, equality, and freedom. Hegel's vision was in part a response to Kant's (1781) claim that humans do not have access to knowledge of the noumenal (i.e., things in themselves, such as the true, unfiltered nature of God or the world). Hegel contended that we can access the noumenal by studying the phenomenal development of the world spirit. That is, we can come to know the direction social history will take by studying natural and human history. His understanding of history was informed by Schelling's notion of the *Idea* (Shannon, 2013) and by an eschatological, Christian conception of time that infused history with a purpose and meaning (Zhang, 2010). The natural flow of history, thus understood, evolves toward higher forms of consciousness. The connection to genealogy is that this view of historical evolution was shared by moral historians of Nietzsche's day. Although they believed they had discovered the evolutionary history of moral progress, Nietzsche (1887), maintained that they merely presupposed the progress they claimed to have discovered. They did so because

they tapped into and reproduced what Lyotard (1979), a century later, would label a metanarrative: in this case, a narrative of moral and social progress.

To avoid *theorizing into the blue* and merely reproducing existing thought systems, as the moral historians of his time did, Nietzsche (1887) advised a careful, etymological study of documents. Because the scope of his *Genealogy of Morals* covered millennia, Nietzsche could employ his training as a classical philologist to study the evolution of words. This method worked well enough for Nietzsche, but it is, in fact, rather ineffective for analyses that operate on the range of decades rather than centuries or millennia. As such, other methods aligned to a Nietzschean framework must be developed. One promising alternative to Nietzsche's etymological approach can be deduced from Bourdieu's (1981, 1984) examination of differential reproduction (see Fuller, 2002; Johnson, 2014). This approach proposes studying conceptual evolution by examining the extent to which propositions are either faithfully or differentially reproduced when a cited model or idea is used in an essay. If the model or idea is perfectly reproduced, it is said to be faithfully reproduced. If there is some slight difference in use, the reproduction is said to be differential. The promise of this approach is that it allows the analyst to mark shifts in usage and identify conceptual change. If a change-in-use is then carried forward by others, the bestowed variation indicates a point of discursive evolution. Despite its similarities to Nietzsche's philological approach, the method is also problematic, because it conflicts with Nietzsche's anti-essentialism, which suggests that all conceptual reproduction is necessarily differential.

Better aligned with Nietzsche's metaphysical nominalism is an approach developed in association with a biological systems model of language and discourse. Here, discourses are understood as open, complex systems that are porously bound to maintain a flexible stability; material from outside the system is internalized, assimilated, and transformed to enable growth and regeneration, or autopoiesis (Capra & Luisi, 2014). Conceptual systems interact with other systems and are nested within larger conceptual organizations – sharing narratives, cognitive tools, and ideas. Academic discourses, perhaps more than others, develop internal structures that organize concepts and regulatory processes. These include feedback loops and selection algorithms that function to sustain the discourse by balancing homeostasis and growth. Notable among these processes are peer review, the disciplinary socialization of junior scholars, and tenure and promotion.

Conceptual Structures

If discourses are understood as conceptual systems, ideas can be said to function as the nodes of the communal, schematic networks of the conceptual world. The term conceptual structure, then, refers to practices that have become materialized within a thought system. Consider a path. The path itself is not a material thing. It is the result, however, of a material process: animals travelling through the woods, for instance. Although the path is not a thing itself (but merely the absence of other things), it is nonetheless effectual. The path becomes the path of least resistance, the easiest way to get through the underbrush. Perhaps the path later becomes a trail, a dirt road, and a paved road lined with traffic signs and shops. A similar process occurs in conceptual systems when ways of understanding become accepted and then sanctioned. They become ruts, roads, and cognitive tools that efficiently prepackage complex ideas. The analogy of the path has its limitations, however, because although conceptual structures are formed and function similarly to paths, they are also reproducible and portable like memes (see Blackmore, 1999). The idea is that a set of ideas gets used in some way, someone else uses the concept in *more or less* the same way, a third person takes up the idea, and so on. The concept is thereby reproduced, but not in the exact same way. It is differentially reproduced by thinkers who understand and employ the idea slightly differently. At some point, the practice of putting together a set of ideas and using them becomes, like a path, something recognized and used by others. The binary, triad, or conceptual model then changes from a tool present at hand to something ready to hand (Heidegger, 1926). We cease thinking about the model as an idea and use it to do other things and to think other thoughts.

Binaries and Triads

One way to go about conducting a genealogical analysis of concepts, then, is to identify and examine the conceptual structures that guide a discourse. A study of democracy and citizenship in social studies education, for example, found that scholarship in the U.S. is heavily influenced by the customary use of two conceptual structures: the emancipatory binary and the progressive triad (Johnson, 2014). Binary conceptual constructions generally function by dividing a field into two groups, whereby the two terms of the binary serve as oppositional poles (good/bad, living/nonliving, land/water, light/dark, etc.). The use of binaries is, of course, not original to this discourse. It likely predates written language. Nor is the study of the anatomy and function of binaries new (see e.g., Elbow, 1986). But they have been understood and interpreted in very different ways. Hegel (1807), for example, understood binaries to be the metaphysical pistons of historical evolution via dialectical synthesis. Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) and

Genealogy of Morals (1887) can be understood as critiques of the binaries implicitly common to Christianity and Hegel. Ferdinand de Saussure (1959), Claude Levi-Strauss (1958), and Benjamin Whorf (1956) each maintained that to understand a linguistic community, we must recognize how conceptual categories affect perception and cognition. Perhaps the most popular work on the analysis of binaries is that of Jacques Derrida (1976). He rejected attempts to synthesize binaries and sought to show how they hide and maintain inequality. More recently, Slavoj Zizek (2009) argued that, although helpful as pedagogical tools, all binaries deceive by hiding alternatives.

Conceptual Origins

As noted, Nietzsche (1887) and Foucault (1971) cautioned against the search for singular origins. Though their views differed somewhat (Ansell-Pearson, 1997), both maintained that concepts and belief systems have contested histories and multiple origins. Despite the mistrust of assigning singular origins, the historian must begin a story somewhere. Nietzsche (1887) began his genealogical analysis of good and evil with 19th century “English psychologists,” as he called them, even though his scope included all of written history. Foucault (1977) began *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* with the torture and execution of the regicide Damiens in 18th-century France. Foucault explained that he chose this origin not because the torture and death instigated or inaugurated the singular birth of a new age, but because it saliently illustrated an ongoing development that had multiple births, miscarriages, and ancestors. Similarly, my analysis begins with three papers from the late 1970s, a time when, according to Cleo Cherryholmes (1982), social studies education in the United States was in a state of transition. Other essays or starting points might also make for valid places to start (e.g., Brubaker et al., 1977; Bruner, 1969; Morrisett, 1977), but the essays by Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1977), Anyon (1978), and Giroux and Penna (1979) serve as representative and somewhat foundational illustrations of the emancipatory binary and the progressive triad.

The Discourse on Citizenship and Democracy

Since the late 1970s, the scholarship on citizenship education has generally organized the field according to whether approaches to education reproduce the status quo or transform society. In recent years, the conversation within social studies education scholarship has drawn more tightly around the now taken-for-granted proposition that, whatever else it might be, good education is transformative. How did this perspective come to dominate this discourse? The issue is complex, and there are various satisfactory ways to explain the development, but the

answer put forth here is that the binary took root in the field during the 1970s, in association with the importation of the ideas of the Frankfurt School. The worldview underlying the Frankfurt School was structured around an organizational binary: Us (the oppressed) versus Them (the oppressors). The binary was infused with basic universal normativity: good versus evil. The normative binary was paired with a progressive or eschatological (Zhang, 2010) conception of history that postulated that human society was evolving toward increasing equality or freedom. Within Social Studies Education in the US, this neo-Marxist confluence of beliefs interacted with a preexisting liberal perspective that also cautioned against the intentional reproduction of the status quo, and gave rise to the emancipatory triad that prevails in contemporary scholarship and preserves the reproduce/reconstruct binary.

1970s: Socialization

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Social Studies Education scholars in the US and elsewhere expressed concerns about the direct and indirect role the education system played in protecting and reproducing the status quo (e.g., Althusser, 1971; Apple, 1971; Goldenson, 1978). One view held that because the government had a vested interest in supporting the status quo, the state education system functioned as an ideological apparatus that promoted right and proper beliefs: i.e., patriotism, capitalism, and patriarchal hegemony. Althusser's (1971) formulation portrayed the government as a vague, impersonal source of power and domination, and identified the education system as an ideological state apparatus: a nonviolent, indirect tool used by the government to support the status quo. A second set of ideas popularized by Althusser's essay were the correlative notions of hailing and subjectification. These terms identified a process or event whereby an anonymous person becomes a subject, in both senses of the word (agent and object), when they are called out as an individual by someone in a position of authority, having the power to assign responsibility and culpability.

Jean Anyon (1978) can be read to have merged in use the two notions from Althusser's essay by calling out teachers as responsible agents in the state machine of indoctrination. Anyon's focus on the role of teachers expanded Althusser's critique of the education system's conservative socialization of students. She did so by troubling the notion of neutral teaching. Anyon explained that teachers could never be politically neutral, because when teachers merely presented the facts of the existing social structure, the effect was to normalize, in the students' minds, the social institutions described. That is, when teachers explained the structure and function of existing institutions without critiquing them, students came to accept existing relations and structures as reasonable, natural, normal, and valid. In this way, Anyon claimed, apolitical teachers

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unintentionally supported the status quo. She asserted that if the conservative socialization being sponsored by schools were to be opposed, teachers could not remain neutral; they must actively oppose the institutional socialization through direct counter-socialization.

In making this argument, Anyon employed a forced-choice, or binary. This binary grouped all teachers into two antagonistic camps: those who actively counter-socialized students and therefore supported social reconstruction, and those who did not and, as a result, intentionally or unintentionally supported the status quo. Anyon's conceptualization of the field negated any and all alternative approaches: each approach was to be characterized as either reproducing or transforming the status quo. Anyon's model exemplifies how binaries function to reduce a multiplicity of choices to one choice.

Giroux and Penna (1979) supported Anyon's contention that active counter-socialization was required to contest the conservative programming imparted by state schools. Rather than direct attention to teachers' unintentional complicity in conservative socialization, however, they discussed how the hidden curriculum, or "the unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying structure of meaning in both the formal content as well as the social relations of school and classroom life" (p. 22), influenced students' perceptions of the normalcy and legitimacy of the unequal relationships and social interactions common to schools. Giroux and Penna suggested that this tacit structure was far more insidious than direct forms of indoctrination that occurred through the official curriculum. It is much easier, the argument suggested, for a student or teacher to recognize and criticize an articulated policy or publicized event as unjust than it is to challenge the untheorized and apparently natural order of things. To oppose the reproduction of the "cultural and economic interests of a stratified society" (p. 26), the authors advocated teaching students how society *should* function rather than teaching about how society functioned (or was understood to function).

Giroux and Penna's argument resembled Anyon's in that both endorsed counter-socialization to usher in transformation and to "help implement the rationale for reconstructing a new social order" (p. 39), and both essays sought to reframe neutral or moderate positions as inadvertently conservative. The structure of the arguments differed in other ways, however. Giroux and Penna's model of the field did not fully collapse the various approaches to social studies down to a binary. Although their essay supported the reproduce/reconstruct binary by evaluating different approaches according to whether they sponsored stasis or change, the approaches were analyzed in reference to three perspectives: structural-functional, phenomenologist, and neo-Marxist.

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Giroux and Penna explained that the functionalists viewed school as an institution that provided “a valuable service in training students to uphold commitments and to learn skills required by society” (p. 23). That is, the functionalists understood and explained school according to how well it helped students succeed, fit in, and maintain the existing society. The authors rejected this approach because it stressed “consensus and stability rather than movement... and downplay[ed] notions of social conflict and competing socio-economic interests” (p. 24). Moreover, because the approach attempted to be apolitical, it failed to problematize “the basic beliefs, values, and structural socio-economic arrangements characteristic of American society” (p. 24). In sum, approaches to education based on functionalism were rejected because the attempted neutrality was believed to serve the status quo.

Giroux and Penna maintained that a second approach, the phenomenological, moved “far beyond the structural-functional position in its approach to the study of schooling” because it raised “to a new level of discussion the relationship between the distribution of power and knowledge” (p. 24). The problem with this approach, however, was that by “endorsing the value and relevance of students’ intentionality, the new sociology ... succumbed to a notion of cultural relativity” (p. 25). Since this pluralistic approach accepted all students’ views as valid, even those who supported the status quo, the approach was rejected. The third and preferred approach discussed was the neo-Marxist perspective, which was said to offer “the most insightful and comprehensive model for a more progressive approach for understanding the nature of schooling and developing an emancipatory program for social education” (p. 23).

Giroux and Penna’s model organized the conceptual field in a way that is standard among progressive models. The first approach is said to preserve the status quo. The second, newer model also preserves the existing condition, but does so unintentionally or to a smaller degree. The third approach is said to promote social change. This common way of evaluating approaches to teaching and curriculum along a continuum that runs from reproducing the status quo to transforming society reflects the theoretical perspective of the Frankfurt School.

A Pluralist Approach

The two preceding essays’ advocacy for social change exemplifies the emancipatory approach to citizenship education as expressed in the late 1970s. The next one aligns with the liberal/pluralist perspective because it aims to cultivate the intellectual agency of students rather than explicitly promote social transformation and justice. If Cherryholmes’s (1982) contention that the late 1970s experienced a theoretical shift is accepted, then the *Three Traditions* model might be said

to represent the old guard. Originally offered in *Social Education* in 1970, the model was published at different times and in different places by various combinations of Robert Barr, James Barth, and Samuel Shermis (BBS hereafter). The model reflected a commitment to pluralism by endorsing approaches to teaching that supported critical thinking and that sought to prepare “citizens to rule themselves in a complex and shifting environment” (Shermis & Barth, 1982, p. 13). The model has come to serve as a template for much social studies education conceptualizing since the 1970s.

The model contended that there were three basic approaches to social studies education: citizenship transmission, the disciplinary approach, and reflective inquiry. The structure of the schema and its presentation was similar to Giroux and Penna’s model of the field: the first approach was dismissed for being conservative, the second approach was characterized as improved but flawed, and the third approach was believed to facilitate social progress. The *Three Traditions* model supported a classically liberal approach to education and preferred teaching that aimed to cultivate students’ intellectual agency. The model indirectly supported the binary, however, because it supposed (1) that transmission/reproduction is bad, and, more subtly, (2) that if students were given the opportunity to think for themselves, they would, as a matter of course, come to the belief that equality, justice, and democracy are desirable. The model did not call for the inculcation of a progressive worldview, but rather presupposed it (not altogether unlike the moral historians of Nietzsche’s day presupposed the evolution of morality). The *Three Traditions* model, and the pluralist approach it represented, has been the primary alternative to the emancipatory approach within social studies education literature (Johnson, 2014). Because the model tacitly supported the idea that the public use of reason leads to social evolution, the model supported the progressive narrative that, in the 1970s, began to direct the discourse on citizenship education in the social studies.

1980s: Participatory Democracy

Of recent decades, democracy was most directly theorized in the U.S. in the 1980s. During this decade, the idea that the government was a source of oppressive power to be resisted yielded to the view that people should participate in and engage with the government to further democracy. As such, discussions of citizenship education showed a decreased focus on counter-socialization and an increased attention to promoting political participation. The development marked the regular occurrence of a different binary, one that opposed (bad) representative forms of democracy to (good) participatory forms.

According to Carole Pateman (1970), since the 1930s, political theorists increasingly viewed classical, participatory democracy to be obsolete, and the reason for its obsolescence was that citizens were thought to have become unable to effectively participate in democratic governance. The view was based in part on the fact that in the first half of the century, demagogues who dismantled the democratic state and created totalitarian governments were elected during times of increased electoral participation. The idea was that when the easily-swayed masses became politically involved, they made poor (undemocratic) choices. The political scientists' loss of faith in the electorate led to a proliferation of protectionist (representative) models of democracy that informed curriculum in public education following World War II. Of concern to George Wood (1985) was that the protectionist model was self-perpetuating. Curriculum that disseminated the protectionist/representative model taught students that democracy meant electing representatives who governed on behalf of the electorate. The result of this education was that students learned less about active and participatory governance and were, as a result, less capable of effectively participating in government. The approach worked, but for the wrong reasons. The passivity of the population facilitated stability and thereby validated the protectionist model, but only at the cost of a *diminished* democracy. The good news, claimed Wood, was that the fuller, participatory model of democracy could also be self-generating. That is, if students are taught that the value and power of democracy resides in the active participation of discerning and well-educated citizens, and correlatively, if the students are taught how to effectively participate in governing, the result will be a populace prepared to actively participate in democratic governance.

Wood (1985) framed the field of citizenship education with this binary, and he proposed that teachers generally use either a "citizenship transmission or a social science approach" (p. 44). Although this evaluation of the field mirrored BBS's *Three Traditions* model (1977), Wood cited Giroux (1983), presumably because Giroux, like Wood, also discussed social epistemology. The binary used by Wood conveyed the same primary message of the *Three Traditions* model, which is that transmission of the conservative status quo is bad, and teaching students how to make informed and effective social decisions is good.

Elizabeth Guyton (1988), who also discussed democratic participation, provided an example of how a binary model can be reconfigured as a triadic one to allow for more complexity. Drawing from Weissberg (1974), Guyton added an eponymous *intermediate* approach to Wood's model. The addition understood the field to be more linear and slightly more complex, and the model organized approaches to democratic education into three versions: representative (people

choose their leaders), intermediate (representatives are responsive to their constituents), and participatory (participation is direct and extended beyond the legislature to include other aspects of social living). Guyton began with older approaches to citizenship education that taught students how the government operates, that authority should be respected, and how to be productive citizens who would “generate support for the system and the status quo” (p. 23). Characteristic of progressive models such this one is that older approaches are less advanced. Such a presupposition is expected: for, if, as Hegel suggested, the world advances in accordance with Reason, older models will be less advanced than newer ones. If Guyton’s model were emancipatory, it would have explained how the new curriculum or pedagogy inspired social change that led to equality and justice. However, because the advanced approaches were said to promote active and effective participation, her model, like Wood’s and BBS’s, was pluralistic.

Beverly Gordon’s 1985 essay, on the other hand, did employ an emancipatory binary to make sense of the field. The reading was heralded with a question: “whether we as educators intend for citizenship simply to function as a mode of ideological domination, conforming students to the demands of dominant society; or whether citizenship education should be designed to foster social reconstruction;” it was confirmed in the response: “our task then is to determine how it is that citizenship education functions either to reproduce the social condition[s] ... that reinforce a class-stratified society ... or reconstitute society according to the principles of social justice” (p. 2).

As is common with binary constructions, the conceptual landscape sketched by Gordon was a simple and austere one. It held that approaches to teaching could be boiled down to those that reproduced the unjust structure and those that enabled the progressive transformation of society. Perhaps due to an awareness of how starkly polarizing this conceptualization of education is, Gordon supplemented the binary with a couple of familiar, triadic conceptions from Giroux (1980) and BBS (1977). Gordon used the interpretive method that has become standard in emancipatory triads: she collapsed the first two elements of the pluralistic model (BBS’s) into the first category of an emancipatory schema (Giroux’s) and moved reflective inquiry into the middle of the triad. The third and preferred category for pedagogical and curricular approaches was assigned to emancipatory approaches that sought to transform society.

Gordon began, then, with a simple emancipatory binary that was perhaps employed to serve a rhetorical function. She complicated that dichotomous field by amalgamating two triadic models and arguing that although reflective inquiry was an improvement over direct transmission, it did not sufficiently support transformation. Her reasoning was that teaching based on reflective

inquiry overlooked “how ideological or structural constraints in the larger society are reproduced in schools,” making it possible that “the basic nature of existing social arrangements in the wider society may remain unquestioned” (p. 3). That is, promoting intellectual agency might support progressive transformation, but it also left open the possibility that some students might favor the status quo. From this, Gordon channeled Anyon’s (1978) logic, which held that those approaches that do not actively promote reconstruction passively support reproduction. Gordon, then, illustrated how the progressive triad is reducible to the reproduce/reconstruct binary.

The essays discussed above illustrate the influence of the 19th-century narrative of social progress. In the late 1980s and the 1990s, however, this metanarrative was persuasively challenged. Writing from the 1990s reveal scholars attempted to reconcile the postmodern critique of metanarratives with Hegelian-inspired visions of history. The totality of social events explained through a tight narrative of oppression and redemption was pried open a bit to try to incorporate new views of subjectivity that would afford a more complex model than the one that allowed only three subject-positions: oppressor, oppressed, and emancipator. The vitality of the binary on the discourse is recognized, however, when it is observed that rather than abandon the emancipatory perspective, scholars generally sought to accommodate postmodern challenges within the established emancipatory perspective.

Reproducing and Reconstructing the 1990s

In the 1990s, democracy continued to be conceptualized through the participatory and representative opposition (e.g., Bickmore, 1993; Gutmann, 1994; Parker, 2003). The ascendant idea, however, home to considerable conceptual theorizing, was multiculturalism. Ceola Ross Baber (1995) discussed the topic and surmised that there were three primary approaches to multicultural education: “cultural nationalism, cultural pluralism, and cultural criticism” (p. 342). According to Baber’s interpretation, the cultural nationalists favored one or another hegemonic, unified canon of cultural and political beliefs; the cultural pluralists recognized difference and desired to protect it; the cultural critics promoted the unfolding realization of our democratic potential. Or again, the three nodes of Baber’s conceptual triad were populated by those who wished to maintain the status quo, those who sought liberal, plural-minded reform, and those who sought to “create a community of authentic, emancipatory, liberatory, critical, and transformative voices” (p. 352). The third and preferred category of the model illustrated the growing tension between the traditional Left’s universal conception of social identity based on class, and the fracture developing because of the growing influence of multiculturalism and

postmodern conceptions of subjectivity. Baber's goal of retaining and acknowledging "voices from microcultures of color" reflected the influence of multiculturalism. She noted that this goal was aligned, however, with that of forging alliances "with progressive voices from the microculture" (p. 344). It is a position that frames group identity and multiculturalism within the traditional progressive vision. As such, Baber ended up with a model that was somewhere between the emancipatory and the pluralist models discussed above, using the language of each without quite clarifying whether the goal was to promote intellectual agency or social transformation.

Marilynne Boyle-Baise (1995) also recognized tensions between multiculturalism and traditional, class-based oppression discourses. She indicated that her views on multicultural education were sometimes dismissed because she, as a white woman, was on the wrong side of a binary that determined authenticity in reference to race rather than beliefs. Citing Sleeter and Grant (1994), Boyle-Baise identified five approaches to multicultural education, maintaining that they could be boiled down to two: those that unwittingly maintained the status quo and those that initiated social transformation. Specifically, these were the pluralist and the emancipatory approaches. Like Anyon (1978) and Gordon (1985), she surmised that pluralist approaches to multiculturalism failed to promote social progress: "advocating tolerance is different from moving to reconstruct school knowledge and practices. The former promotes plurality, while the second advances systemic reform" (Boyle-Baise, 1995, p. 335). That is, when the conceptual field is collapsed by the reproduce/reconstruct binary, the ability to identify agents as anything other than emancipator or oppressor is eliminated. The binary functions to simplify and polarize into antagonistic groups.

Boyle-Baise's essay acknowledged the potential of binaries to congeal into this sort of oppositional construction, and, in her words, "to deintellectualize the field" (p. 333). And yet, rather than deconstruct the reproduce/reconstruct binary, her conclusion reaffirmed the logic that there are two types of approaches to multicultural education: those that maintain the status quo and those that transform it. This strongly attests to the deeply-rooted influence of the binary-based, progressive conceptualization that directs the discourse on democracy and citizenship in social studies education in the U.S. Its influence is so strong that scholars, at times, have been compelled to align their conclusions with it, even as they attempt to confront its inconsistencies.

A similar phenomenon is observed in Chilcoat and Lingon's 1994 survey of citizenship education. The authors found "at least three perspectives on citizenship" (p. 129), which they labeled

cultural transmission, reflective inquiry into social science knowledge, and democratic transformation. This is another example of taking the *Three Traditions* framework, moving reflective inquiry to the middle, and adding the transformative approach to the end. This account is slightly different than emancipatory triads because the third category combines the democratic focus of the 1980s with the notion of transformation (the term *transformation*, by this point, had mostly supplanted *reconstruction*). This conceptual triad functioned like most other emancipatory triads in that the authors rejected cultural transmission because it directly reproduced the status quo; it rejected reflective inquiry because it indirectly supported the status quo; and it advocated approaches aimed at transformation. The third node of Chilcoat and Lingon's model combined a loose mixture of pluralistic and emancipatory approaches, including the promotion of critical thinking, ethical decision making, and participation. Ethical decision making, for example, was forwarded by the authors, but they did not address what or whose standard would be used to adjudicate ethical decisions. That is, like pluralists, no single ethic was offered as the universal standard, but like emancipatory scholars, equality and social justice were (indirectly) granted objective or universal warrant. Similarly, critical thinking, often associated with reflective inquiry and pluralism, was promoted, but done so in a manner that channeled Critical pedagogy. Like BBS before, and others after (Parker, 2003; Westheimer & Kahn, 2004), the conceptualization sought to combine the moral certainty of the emancipatory perspective with the respect for diverse views that characterizes the pluralist position.

The essay by Chilcoat and Lingon, along with those by Baber and Boyle-Baise, indicate (1) that authors were thinking about the challenges posed by postmodern theories to binary-based (and other) metanarratives, and (2) that the reproduce/reconstruct binary had come to direct the discourse itself. Although the influence of the binary on thinking within the field is striking, it should not be suggested that no other perspectives have been offered. They have, though with less frequency, and at times their differences have made them stand out (Johnson, 2014). Two such counterexamples are discussed next.

Divergence

Kevin Vinson (1998) discussed a study with results that diverged from the then-standard view that most teachers intentionally or unintentionally socialized their students in ways that supported the status quo. Vinson's study found that teachers identified more strongly with reflective inquiry, social criticism, and personal development than with citizenship transmission or social science. His study was theorized through Martorella's (1996) framework, which included five citizenship education perspectives: (1) transmission of the cultural heritage, (2)

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social science, (3) reflective inquiry, (4) social critique, and (5) personal development. Martorella's model is significant because despite initial appearances, it did not replicate the progressive narrative in ways that emancipatory (and even pluralist) models generally have. The five-part model began with the first three elements of the *Three Traditions* model, and in that way it carries forward the tradition. Martorella's model was nonstandard, however, because he did not collapse the model into two or three approaches in order to associate pluralist approaches with reproduction or identify the Critical approach as the best or most advanced. The justice-orientation remained one approach among others. A second difference was that the fifth perspective, personal development, has not often appeared in the literature since the 1970s. More importantly, despite being the last node in the model, it was not presented as the latest, most advanced approach to develop in the evolution of citizenship education.

Without having studied the discourse, one might reasonably presume that the order of perspectives within a conceptualization of the field is mostly insignificant. The argument that has been forwarded here suggests otherwise. Indeed, the significance of model structure is illustrated by Vinson's (1998) study and a similar one by Anderson et al. (1997). Both investigations found that classroom practices of teachers were not, in fact, conservatively socializing their students. Vinson's divergent results are more interesting when we consider that his own perspective and his analysis of the Martorella model were aligned with the progressive narrative. Vinson noted that his own view most closely resembled social criticism, that he held a concern for issues common to Critical pedagogues, and that he believed curriculum should include "forms of knowledge that have been historically marginalized or devalued (e.g., those by culturally dominated groups, for example women, the working class, and persons of color, among others)" (p. 51). That his view was affiliated with the progressive perspective, but the results of the study were divergent, suggests that the unusual *structure of the model* he used was consequential.

The contention that the structures we use to organize concepts can become embedded in a discourse and can, as a result, influence thinking, is of course not new. This is a key component of the social epistemology used by critical, neopragmatic, and postmodern pedagogues. An example from within the field was provided by Whitson and Stanley (1996), who contended that the intellectual legacy of the Cartesian mind/body dualism, and similar binaries derived from it, were responsible for many conceptual errors made by both progressives and conservatives in the history of citizenship education. Connecting the mind/body dualism to the fact/value distinction, Whitson and Stanley critiqued the social science model, the student-centered approach, and the

goal of counter-socialization. Whitson and Stanley contrasted approaches grounded in these two binaries with the work of Pierce and Dewey in the United States, and the phenomenological/hermeneutic German tradition in Europe. The essay used different binaries and moved in a different direction than this one, but it recognized that dichotomous thinking has been unduly influential in social studies education.

In the same book, *Educating the Democratic Mind*, editor Walter Parker (1996) agreed with Stanley that we should follow Dewey's lead. Parker was less optimistic regarding efforts to dissolve the various manifestations of the socialization/counter-socialization binary, warning that "attempts to devise a theory that overcomes the natural tension between [conservative educators' goal of socialization and progressive educators' goal of critique] are futile and unnecessary" (p. 16). The caution was accompanied by a model that interpreted the field through the familiar progressive triad: (1) the rational negotiation of private interests, (2) the promotion of a vigorous participatory democracy, and (3) social transformation. The pattern is familiar (conservative, reform-oriented, truly progressive), and Parker presented the transformative approach as one that would uncover and contest embedded patterns of understanding that support entrenched ways of thinking and living. Parker provides one last example, then, of a model whose prevalence illustrates the influence and ubiquity of the largely unrecognized conceptual triad. The recurrence of the model over the last five decades strongly suggests that the practice of academic citation creates a dynamic between the conceptual structures and the discourse within which they are nested, causing the model, in meme-like fashion, to be differentially reproduced, while supporting the reproduce/reconstruct binary that orders the discourse.

Conclusion

I maintain that two conceptual structures, the reproduce/reconstruct binary and the progressive triad, have been used so regularly in scholarship on citizenship education that the structures, embedded within models of the discipline, have coevolved alongside a normative, progressive narrative whose origins can be traced back to Hegel (and elsewhere). The progressive view presupposes that social and moral progress are real and desirable and that human society rationally evolves toward justice and equality. This perspective orders the discourse on citizenship in social studies education. Its influence grows as it provides graduate students and junior scholars a familiar narrative with which to read, recount, and understand the world. The progressive narrative, forwarded by Hegel and adapted by Marx, Dewey, the Frankfurt School, and many others, allows scholars to imagine a world evolving toward greater justice and equality,

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and by extension it allows emancipatory, liberal, and other scholars to imagine themselves to be on the right side of history.

Binaries and other conceptual structures support such narratives. They maintain paths for thinking and provide a practical orientation for the intellectual landscape. Once sufficiently developed within the discourse through citational practices, the conceptual structures embodied in models and perspectives become integral parts of the conceptual landscape and influence what is seen, discussed, and made familiar. Although there is much value in having a shared perspective, I contend there is also value in having access to other, less-traveled paths. The primary goal of this genealogical analysis is to raise awareness of the prevalence of the reproduce/reconstruct binary and the progressive narrative. A secondary goal might be to invite scholars to question several of the associated presuppositions and to thereby begin to explore other paths. I wonder, for instance, if the field has more or less exhausted the value of organizing and evaluating curriculum and pedagogy based on whether the status quo is maintained or transformed? Are there other questions we might ask? Might we invite into our discussions authors, such as Hume (1751), Nietzsche (1886, 1887), and Mackie (1977), who suggest that *justice* and *equality* ultimately refer to little more than a falsely universalized desire for revenge, or a tool to manipulate? Or is the field unwilling to entertain such thoughts? Should we be more circumspect about the universality of democracy and about spreading the sentiment that democracy is a universal end (rather than a means), since it seems likely that such thinking blinds Americans to the limitations of democracy and is used to justify the spread of democracy via cruise missiles and regime change? I would like to see more scholarship that genuinely asks whether more Democracy, Equality, and Justice, for example, are necessarily and universally good and that enquires into the unrecognized shared commitments of conservative and progressive perspectives.

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